
First Impressions

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By Kathleen Gage

Whether you currently have a web site or if you are in the planning stages remember your web site can be a fantastic marketing tool if used properly. On the other hand it can also be a very negative representation of your organization. Efficient use of your web site can lower your marketing costs considerably. However, a poor web site, or not knowing how to drive traffic to your site, can cost you untold dollars.

There are some key factors to consider when using your site to market your business. Is the site easy to find? If you depend solely on people doing a web search with key words, in most cases, you will be in for a great deal of disappointment. Unless your company or organization has invested a lot of money to get a good position on the search engines most people won't find your site through a standard search.

A way to make your site easy to find is with your domain name. It should be either your name or your company name. If you are unable to do that because the name has already been taken, then get something as close to your company name as possible.

Make sure your domain name is on absolutely everything you print such as business cards, letterhead, on your email signature, yellow page ad if you have a display ad, and all other marketing material. Make sure your company plans to use the domain name for some time to come. It has cost companies huge amounts of money in reprinting expenses due to a poor marketing plan when they change their domain name midstream.

A powerful way to lower your marketing cost is to have your marketing material available online. You can save a considerable amount of time and money by being able to send someone a web link to your information, rather than sending out a hard copy of your information on the first sign of interest from a potential client. To see how to do this go to

One of the biggest mistakes companies make is to do their own web site. They usually do this because they think they will save money. In the long run it may end up costing much more due to lack of expertise in web design.

Designing a web site involves much more than buying a software program and slapping something together. It takes the knowledge in design to create a professional look. If you don't have the proper training or knowledge your site will reflect that, not only in the way it looks, but in the way it functions. Some other things to consider about a site..... Do you have time to make the frequently needed changes? Do you have the knowledge of how to optimize pictures, knowing HTML code, creating forms for inquiries and other items that can make your site perform at the level you desire?

Remember that your web site may be the first impression others have of your company. Just as you wouldn't dream of presenting yourself in a negative fashion, so you don't want to present your web site in a negative fashion

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